



NEW RELEASE

Renate Aller side walk 6' apart in New York City

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New York Lockdown: These sidewalk visits give us a deep sense of community where community has been forced apart

In April 2020, when New York was in lockdown and the epicentre of the pandemic, Renate Aller created the project *side walk*. She hosted friends and neighbors on her sidewalk or visited them in their street, her camera in self timer mode, recording these masked encounters at a safe 6 feet distance. With voices muted by masks we learn to communicate with our eyes and body language, finding our bearings in a new emotional landscape. These sidewalk visits created a deep sense of community where community had been forced apart.

This project is in the spirit of Rainer Maria Rilke »[...] that each should stand guard over the solitude of the other.«

From the text by **Marilyn S. Kushner**, Curator New York Historical Society Museum:

Renate Aller is about communication. She is about relationships—both within nature and between people. She is about space and how that affects the human condition. Aller makes art and she is about life and art and how they interact.

[...]

...perhaps the best comparison is to look at [side walk] in light of Marina Abramović's performance work, The Artist Is Present, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 2010. Abramović sat across a table from a stranger, neither uttering a word but both staring into the soul of the other. The space around them was energized, as a crowd gathered around at a distance and watched. Aller's and Abramović's performances were ten years apart but so much further apart in the worlds we lived in then and the one that we live in now.

Still, there is something similar in how each artist energized the space with another person, making that space special for the two of them: one encounter with words—another without them, one with previous connections—the other without that history, but both just being in that space and creating their own small world. They never touched but nevertheless created a connection. Indeed, Aller stayed far away on her sidewalk and never touching her guests but, nevertheless, she was giving them a »hug« in so many intangible ways that we are all discovering are possible in these Covid-19 days.

Born in Germany, **Renate Aller** lives and works in New York. Her work is in the collections of corporate institutions, private collectors, and museums, including Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe, NM; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Yale University Art Gallery, CT; George Eastman House, Rochester, NY; New Britain Museum of American Art, CT; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany; Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, WI; Musée des beaux-arts Le Locle, Switzerland; Parrish Art Museum, Watermill, NY, and the New-York Historical Society Museum, 'NY, where the project *side walk – 6' apart in NYC* will be exhibited in 2021.

Exhibitions

Chiaroscuro Gallery, Santa Fe, NM, USA, 10.09.–09.10.2021
Jakopic Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 10.10.2021–30.01.2022
New York Historical Society Museum, NY, March – July 2022

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